

'Who wants the Cooper?'

LONDON CRIES.



THE PROBE;

OR,

MEDICAL AND SURGICAL SCRAPS:

CONTAINING

Wholesome Advice to Old Women and Sucking Babes: Sayings and Sawings, Cuttings, Groans, and Bawlings, as accompaniments to **THE LANCET**: For the Benefit, Sound-wind, and Limb, of this highly-polished—keen-edged—far-penetrating—sharp-pointed AGE!!!

'The Truth, and nothing but the Truth.'

'Nothing extenuate, nor set we down aught in Malice!'

To save Physic from the Dogs!!



London;

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY DUNCOMBE, 19, LITTLE QUEEN-STREET, HOLBORN;
AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

REMARKS,

INTRODUCTORY, SALUTARY, AND PROFOUND.

THERE is a disease of the brain, a sort of *moral itch*, or insect, which, when we take an unprejudiced and enlarged view of the practice of Surgery and Medicine, in connexion with the real good of mankind, is seen to produce more mischief than can well be imagined ; and which has not only paralyzed the energies, but polluted the high character and honour of the Profession itself, to its very core.

The insect which causes the disease so much complained of—this ‘itch of the mind,’—now under consideration, when viewed attentively with glasses of sufficient powers, resembles, in its configuration, especially about its organs of speech, most strikingly *an old woman*, dealing out her store of ‘matter of opinion ;’ by which, if she and mischief have any luck, she may have the good fortune to extend her influence and importance, as a most profound personage, by infecting with her folly, half a dozen credulous tea-drinking gossips, who, when the poison becomes duly matured in their own minds, set up, in due course, as practitioners themselves, for the edification, or rather *infection* of others. Thus a true galvanic circle of mischief is at length most scientifically established : the nature of diseases most eruditely and impertinently determined, and the character of practitioners themselves, by such fiats, are thus either raised to the skies, or levelled with the dust !

We do not intend, by any means, to inculcate that the insect producing this ‘itch of the mind,’—this morbid inclination,—this inveterate propensity to pervert facts, and promulgate prejudice and opinions unasked and unfounded, can exist only in the brain of an old woman, or that all old women are subject to the malady. By no means : we have abundant proof to the contrary. But what is meant is, that such a state of things, as an old woman’s brain of a busy irascible temperament, as is often seen in what is termed ‘an old maid,’ though correctly and anatomically speaking, one cannot possibly imagine such a state of being to exist, without the presence of an impenetrability of mal-formation ; yet as connected with the confirmation of such brains, and the insect producing the disease in question, experience would seem to justify the conclusion, that they are its favourite niduses, or *breeding places*, similar to what is seen

in other vermin, or insects ; most of which have their favourite, if not *peculiar* haunts. As bots, for example, attaching themselves to the insensible part in the stomach of a horse, or, the small worms, ascariides, who pass their hours of revel in the rectum of children.*

A pair of breeches are now well known, whatever might have been the opinion before breeches were worn, such is the antiquity of the disease, not to afford any safeguard whatever, against the attacks of the insect ; which from its strong resemblance already named, and for distinction sake, we shall henceforth denominate 'The Old Woman.'†

* It is somewhat singular, that Mr. Lawrence, that accurate compiler and retailer of other men's ideas, and most ingenious and profound detailer of the theories and discoveries of others, in his intimate and elaborate description of the brain and its functions ; where the mind is shown by him to be clearly nothing better than a secretion, or distillation of that organ, has not treated, or even hinted at the disease in question ; or, attempted even the slightest description of the insect that produces it.

In the enlarged and comprehensive view this gentleman took of brain, matter, and mind, such detail might possibly have been considered as too trifling by him. And some people we know don't 'stick at trifles.' It is to be hoped, however, that we may yet be favoured with some remarks on this most interesting subject, by this ingenious and original follower of Cuvier and others.

‡ Sir William Blizard, we hear, does not believe in the disease ; denies vehemently even the existence of the insect ; and swears 'there's no such thing at all,' as 'the Old Woman !'

Sir William Curtis, it is said, is also of the same way of thinking with his old City 'chum' and name-sake, Sir William, as to 'that 'ere.' Authority of no small calibre we grant ! 'Two *Billies* against one poor 'Old Woman,' are fearful odds ! But in spite of '*weight*,' we prefer 'science,' and therefore shall *back* the *Old Woman*.

It is to be observed, that those who are possessed with the '*Old Woman's*' disease, not only deny its existence, but the existence of every thing else which is not congenial to the confines and dogmas of their own taste, however limited in intellect and defective in the capacity of sound observation.

Sir Everard Home, we are credibly informed, has also 'an eye' upon this most interesting subject. A reciprocity of feeling exists between us—for *we* also have 'an eye' upon him.

Mr. Cline, it is likewise whispered, and audibly too, with his usual candour, liberality and singleness of heart, is *closely* inspecting, with all his eyes on the subject, spectacles and all ! the merits of the question. Who can doubt the result.

Neither of the last named authorities have yet put forth 'an opinion.' It is even possible, that it may yet be our task to do the office for them !

We despair to hear any thing on the subject from Sir Astley—there being, as is well known, only one Sir Astley in the world, it is really wanton waste of ink and paper to write Paston Cooper ; but we add Bart. into the bargain, as a barrier of distinction to the scurvy set of little nobility lately sprung up. It is impossible that we can allude either to Sir Columbine Daniel, or Sir Charles Aldis.

We hope, in writing Bart. after Sir Astley's name, the printer will be careful to avoid any typographical error. Our ear being accustomed to jingling sounds, renders us rather nervous upon the subject.

We say we despair of hearing any thing from Sir Astley, because he is too *fundamental* a surgeon to get any thing of 'brain' out of him. He is truly what may be literally termed a High Church—cut and come again operator. 'Brain' therefore is out of his province—it leads to the phantoms of physiology ; and in the true spirit of a Spanish Grandee, Sir Astley leaves the drudgery of thinking to Abernethy and others. Poor Abernethy, too often 'bit by genius not inspired !' But more on these subjects another time.

A pair of gloves, sedulously worn, may preserve the wearer, with common care, from the ill effects of the common itch, but not so with the old woman. Wherever there is a proper nidus of brain, there she is sure to inhabit. She respects a pair of pantaloons no more than she does a petticoat; neither age, sex, nor costume, is exempt. She ravages equally in the brain of a prating dogmatical coxcomb in cossacks, as in the graver acrimony and virulence of short velveteens. Even youth and beauty are not exempt, and the most lovely images of Eve have betrayed the inward ravages of 'the Old Woman.'

We wish clearly to be understood that we never mean to advance on any subject, any doctrine, remark, detail, or description, which is not reducible to demonstration.

Therefore, we must premise before we enter further into the subject, that as far as *sex* goes, our calling the insect producing the disease, now the object of our consideration, 'The Old Woman,' is certainly so far gratuitous, suppositious, and hypothetical.

We have talked of its organs of speech, but of sexual organs we know nothing. Nor do we believe, we speak with all proper deference, not wishing to check the enterprize of scientific research, that any such organs have yet been found. We live however in hope, as already hinted in our first note; Mr. Lawrence is indefatigable. We have heard Dr. Baillie say, 'I should not wonder to see cherries grow on the heart!'—The Doctor only mentioned cherries *generally*; should the discovery therefore be realized, it is still left for Mr. Lawrence to decide on the *sort*; and if any difficulty should arise on the subject, Grange of Covent Garden, or any of the fruit shops, would do it for him.

On the subject of minute remark, it is astonishing how much has been done; and we are often favoured by a more vivid and familiar picture of the invisible animated world, their habits and customs, than is to be found in the account even of any newly discovered tribe of our own species!

The natural history of the mite, for example, the *cheese mite*, as given in Rees's Encyclopædia, fires the mind with noble energies, by its description of the laudable and persevering exertions of those active animated molecules; in the procreation of their own species, their efforts beggar all description: but we must refer the curious to the profound prolixity of the Work itself, as our pages are too limited to do justice to such lengthy and inexhaustible assiduity.

In a similar way we must beg leave to dismiss any speculation on the probable sexual existence of the subject of our more immediate attention, 'the Old Woman,' whether hermaphroditical or distinct;

N.B. Mr. Charles Bell, so entirely unaccustomed heretofore to talk, speak, or write about himself, will, the Public are respectfully informed, give his formal opinion on the subject, signed and sealed, the moment he can accomplish to his satisfaction, conscientiously, the formation of a capital 'I.'

This Gentleman is under the tuition of the ablest writing master of the age, and is applying himself with the greatest assiduity to overcome his native modesty.

both male and female.—The one naturally attracted by the petticoat; and the other as naturally attacking the breeches; or uniting, making war on both, are wholly left to the speculations of the curious, being questions unqualifiedly hypothetical, and entirely hostile to the spirit and understanding of our present Work.

We shall now therefore confine ourselves to the demonstrable moral effects produced by this disease, 'The Old Woman,' as regards society and the profession, in relation to each other.

This view of the subject will involve a large and important field for enquiry. Facts will be fairly brought to light, and as freely discussed. The monopoly against science, and the advancement of useful knowledge fully exposed, and in the successive numbers of this Work, society will be taught how they have warred against themselves, the advancement of true science, and the best interests of humanity, by aiding and assisting the professional humbug of

'THE OLD WOMAN.'

under which head, for the future, these several subjects will be discussed.

Domestics.

UNDER this head we propose, from time to time, to furnish the public with directions, advice, and observations that will tend, generally, not only to the preservation of health, and prevention of disease, but, as we hope, to remove those hosts of abuses which, to the serious detriment of public health, have got such strong hold on society, in its various prejudices and modes of treatment of complaints, or self-quackery.

The information proposed to be given, is by no means intended to make people wiser than the Doctor—quite the reverse. It is only wished, to make them wiser *in themselves*; or, in other words, to remove, if possible, the load of ignorance and prejudice under which they at present labour. An honourable, able practitioner is always requisite, where disease exists. No book, no written instructions can substitute the necessity of his attendance: nor can there ever be at all an equivalent for his knowledge, obtained from the personal observation and experience of facts in his practical attendance on diseases, whenever that attendance is necessary.

The instructions to be found under the head of 'DOMESTICS,' will indeed, if followed by the public, be mainly an assistance to the honourable and scientific practitioner, who but too frequently has more disease to combat with, than he can conquer, in consequence of the very abuses and ill-treatment we have just named.

Under the division of 'INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD' will be found, such necessary observations and directions upon the diseases and

treatment of children generally; which every mother or parent should possess. Such instruction, if attended to, will not only clear away the host of deleterious or absurd nostrums now in use, in the various forms of cordials, carminatives, elixirs, drops, syrups, cakes, pills, powders, sugar-plums, necklaces, lotions, embrocations, &c.; but give 'fair play' and 'a fair chance' to the practitioner and patient, should any disease exist.—Fair play to the practitioner, because he is called in at a proper season, before the patient has been improperly drugged and dosed.—And a fair chance to the patient, because the proper instructions and treatment in the management of children having been followed, the disease, whatever it may be, has been anticipated, in a measure; and from the knowledge so obtained, its very first approaches detected.

Such necessary information will also enable people, their own prejudices being first removed, to discriminate the man of science, honestly, but independantly, discharging his professional duties, from the sordid sycophant, whose only thought is to smile but to please—the mere dealer in disease, and human misery.

Under the division of 'THE ADULT STATE,' useful observations on the animal economy of youth, manhood, and old age, and the diseases thereon, will be found; with the various modes of treatment necessarily to be observed in the different states of climate and occupation. These will naturally include such peculiarities as are incidental to particular avocations of the working class, or the artisan; such which arise from a sedentary, or studious course of life; and such which are the attendants on the gay, the voluptuous, and the dissipated.

The management of females, and female complaints, will form a distinct division; and the subject will be most elaborately treated. Some of the most formidable complaints human nature is subject to, are in a particular manner attached to the sex; and their prevention shall be our especial care. We know our strength on this ground, we do not speak it boastingly, but it shall be exerted to the uttermost. In common justice, in common gratitude, it is a debt due from manhood and science; and it shall be paid by us, to the uttermost farthing.

(To be continued.)

Scrap.

'All my eye and Betty Martin.' *

VIGOROUS PRACTICE.

For Stomach Complaints and violent Cramps.

Take of sal volatile half a drachm, or 35 drops—of mint water, six ounces to half a pint. Mix and keep in a well closed phial. A table spoonful to be taken every day before dinner; and when the cramp is troublesome.

Sir William Blizard.

* We assure the Public, the honourable Gentlemen, and Hackney Coach men in particular, that we do not allude, in the slightest degree, to Mr. Martin of Galway, nor any part of his family.

COURT END PRACTICE.

For fashionable affections of the Stomach, unknown to the vulgar.

Take of compound Ipecacuan, (or Dover's) powder, half a grain.
Mucilage of Gum Acacia sufficient to make a pill. To be taken
every other night, going to bed.

N. B. If the patient be a young lady of delicate sensitive nerve, after the exhibition of the pill, and a due proportion of friction about the umbilical region, an injection of a tepid olio, mucilaginous fluid, not above blood heat, may tend to compose the mind and produce sleep. Great care should be observed in the introduction of the pipe ; which in young subjects should not be of too large a calibre.

Sir Henry Halford.

For slight chronic affections of the Liver.

Take of Calomel prepared, ten grains ; Opiate confection sufficient to make a pill. To be taken for six weeks, every night and morning fasting.

The late Dr. Currie.

For the cure of Diseased Spines, and every Disease upon Earth.

THE BLUE PILL!!!

Abernethy.

CHEMICAL NICETY.

An elegant exhibition of Epsom Salts.

Infusæ Rosa, (sine acido)	- - - -	3 iss.
Magnesiae sulph.	- - - -	5 ij.
Liquoris potassæ	- - - -	qts xxv.

Astley Cooper, Bart.

NEWS!!!

Sir Gilbert Blane has experienced a slight symptom of good temper, attended by a shivering fit.

Poor Dr. Clutterbuck, we are sorry to hear, has suffered severely from an attack of apoplexy ; a bright idea having accidentally shot across his brain. We are happy to hear, the Doctor is now perfectly safe from any such accidents happening again.

News! news!! 'Another case of successful transfusion,' a la Lancet,—'By Jassus I am as strong as a Bull.' (see the Lady, in the Lancet for October,) with a slight hint,—what blood you chuse.

Case.—An old lady having suffered an immense loss of blood, 4 quarts at least, from the bursting of a varicory, or an outrageously enlarged vein of the leg, had the deficiency supplied—or rather was snatched from the jaws of death, she herself being 'quite chop-fallen,' from the loss of blood—by transfusion.